

AbstinenceNews

NEBRASKA ABSTINENCE EDUCATION PROGRAM

Spring 2006 • Vol. 3 • No.1

Nebraska Youth are the Stars of Our Future!

The needs of Nebraska youth are best met when people and organizations join together to help them grow and develop in healthy ways. Collaboration for the benefit of youth can happen at any level whether statewide or within the community.

Nebraska Partnerships for Positive Youth Development began in 2005 in response to the need for collaboration. The **Partnership** is a statewide initiative of youth-serving people and organizations dedicated to assessing the needs of Nebraska youth and responding to those needs through *Positive Youth Development* practices and principles.



In Nebraska *Positive Youth Development* means:

- ★ Supporting healthy relationships between youth and supportive adults.
- ★ Providing safe, stable and supportive environments for youth.
- ★ Offering opportunities for youth to develop life skills.
- ★ Advocating clear expectations and high standards.
- ★ Providing meaningful opportunities for youth to participate in their community.

Working together to improve the lives of youth offers many advantages. Collaboration helps to deliver consistent messages and reach youth through a variety of channels. It also

offers an opportunity to share resources, expertise and learn from each other.

Collaboration and advocacy of youth development can occur in a wide variety of settings and is not the responsibility of formal youth programs alone.

Providing healthy environments and positive messages for youth can happen in families, schools, religious congregations, neighborhoods, places of employment and a variety of other settings.

If you have the **VISION** but **NEED HELP** and resources in starting a community youth initiative in your area, assistance could be a mouse click away. Limited funding is available for selected communities for the purpose of assessment and technical assistance and **Nebraska Partnerships for Positive Youth Development** can help! Call or email Linda Henningsen at (402) 471-0538, linda.henningsen@hhss.ne.gov for assistance or to add your organization to the growing list of **Partnership** members. Don't forget to visit the **Partnership** web site at: <http://www.hhss.ne.gov/fah/PositiveYouthDevelopment/> for resources and information.



Nebraska Partnerships for Positive YOUTH Development brochure.

Nebraska Hispanic/Latino Youth Recognition and Celebration

On September 12, 2005, Lt. Gov. Rick Sheehy offered a Governor's proclamation in the State Capitol Rotunda declaring September as Hispanic/Latino Youth Recognition Month. The proclamation and rally were the kick-off event for a week-long celebration and community

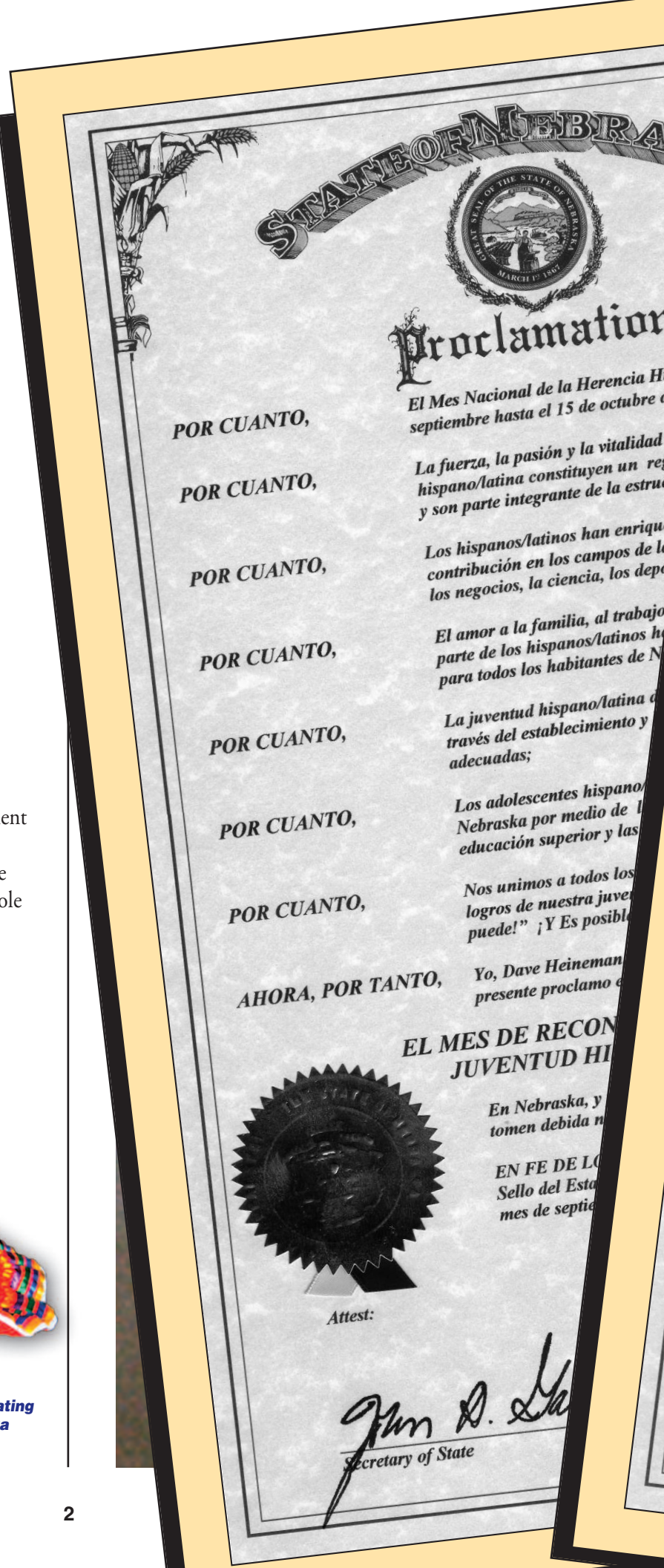
activities across the state. The theme of the statewide initiative was, "Su Nebraska, Su Futuro... Sí se Puede!" ("Your Nebraska, Your Future... It is Possible!") The theme encourages

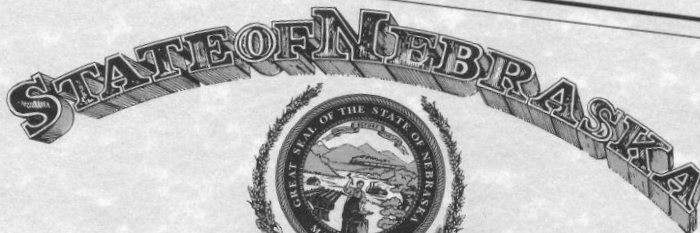
Hispanic/Latino youth to embrace all the possibilities of a positive future by cultivating healthy relationships and making good decisions.

During the Capitol kickoff rally, youth achievement awards were presented to Hispanic/Latino youth from across the state. Several youth received recognition (see next page) and are to be commended for the positive role models they continue to provide for all youth in Nebraska.



Dancer Celebrating at the Nebraska State Capital.





Proclamation

WHEREAS,

National Hispanic Heritage Month is observed from September 15th to October 15th of each year; and

WHEREAS,

The strength, warmth and vitality of the Hispanic/Latino youth culture are treasured gifts to Nebraska and are part of the unique fabric of our state; and

WHEREAS,

Hispanic/Latinos have enriched our state through contributions in the fields of education, law, government, business, science, sports and the arts; and

WHEREAS,

Hispanic/Latinos, whose love of family, hard work and community have set a positive example for all Nebraskans; and

WHEREAS,

Nebraska's Hispanic/Latino youth are achieving their goals by practicing healthy behaviors and establishing healthy relationships; and

WHEREAS,

Hispanic/Latino teenagers of today will contribute to Nebraska's future through entrepreneurship, public service, academics and the arts; and

WHEREAS,

We join with all Nebraskans in honoring the achievements of our Hispanic/Latino youth who know "Sí se Puede!,"...It is Possible!

NOW, THEREFORE,

I, Dave Heineman, Governor of the State of Nebraska, DO HEREBY PROCLAIM the month of September 2005, as

HISPANIC/LATINO YOUTH RECOGNITION MONTH

in Nebraska, and I do hereby urge all citizens to take due note of the observance.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand, and cause the Great Seal of the State of Nebraska to be affixed this Ninth day of September, in the year of our Lord Two Thousand Five.



Attest:

Jan D. Lue
Secretary of State

Dave Heineman
Governor





Additional rally highlights incorporated local as well as national speakers and included ethnic music and dance. “We’re excited about the interest and enthusiasm that surrounded this event. We really had an overwhelming response,” said Linda Henningsen, Adolescent Health Coordinator for Nebraska Health and Human Services System. “This was one opportunity for Nebraska citizens to recognize and celebrate all contributions made by our Hispanic/Latino youth.”

The Nebraska initiative coincided with National Hispanic Heritage Month. Additional activities and events took place in celebration of Latino youth later that week in Columbus, Grand Island, Schuyler, Lexington and Scottsbluff.



Youth Achievement Award Winners at the Nebraska State Capital.

Academic Excellence

Cruz Cabrera
Lexington High School

Community Service

Yesire Diaz
Crete High School

Building Character Through Healthy Choices

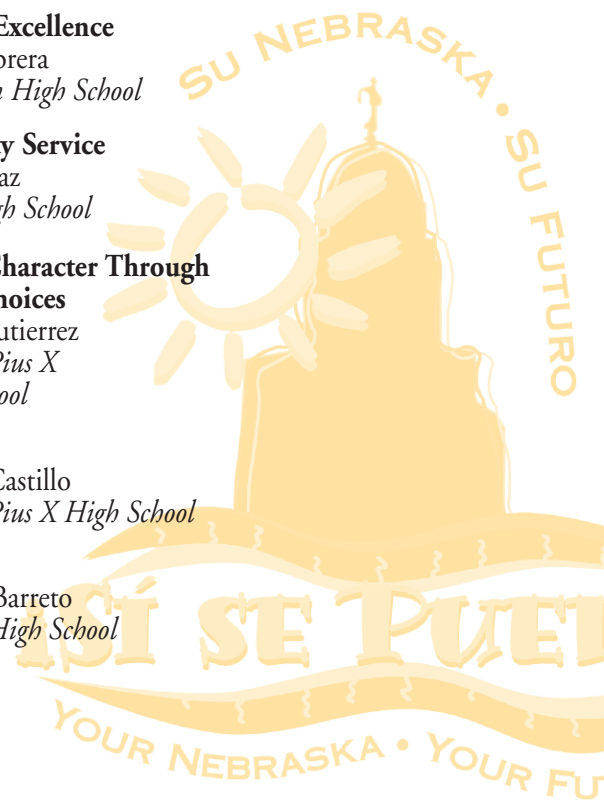
David Gutierrez
Lincoln Pius X High School

Sports

Audrey Castillo
Lincoln Pius X High School

The Arts

Jonatan Barreto
Norfolk High School



RESOURCES

New Parent Resource!

Questions Kids Ask About Sex: Honest Answers For Every Age
<http://www.medinstitute.org>

Research clearly shows that parents have the single greatest influence on the sexual decision-making of their children. Unfortunately, so many of today's parents are afraid to talk with their kids about sex, relationships, self-control and self-respect because they just don't know what to say. This new book solves that problem.

Years in the making, *Questions Kids Ask About Sex* is an easy-to-read resource for parents that delivers a much-needed wake-up call and a motivating challenge to embrace the opportunities to shape their children's future health, hope and happiness.

As with all resources from The Medical Institute, the information presented is medically accurate. But unlike anything else they have developed to date, this book was designed to equip parents in a very practical manner with the information they need to have the impact they want. Helping parents communicate more confidently and strategically can have a powerful, positive impact on the next generation of young people.

Questions Kids Ask About Sex provides age-appropriate answers to the questions today's kids are asking. It does not shy away from the reality of today's teen world, but honestly helps moms and dads better understand what they need to deal with to protect, guide and inspire their children.

Several nationally acclaimed physicians worked diligently on this project to ensure that this tool was relevant, accurate and user-friendly. It has been enthusiastically endorsed by the likes of Michael Medved, Dr. Laura Schlessinger, Dr. Joseph Zanga and Dr. Walt Larimore.

See It and Stop It!

www.seeitandstopit.org

It is not always easy to recognize dating violence and this site reviews warning signs, recognition of different kinds of abuse and ways to **SEE IT**. Have you ever recognized an unhealthy relationship but did not know what to do? **STOP IT** reviews risks, provides resources, links, safety plans and other ways to address unhealthy relationships and how to exit and avoid them in a safe manner. **GET ORGANIZED** helps identify ways for individuals, friends and groups to get involved and provides tool kits, project ideas and technical assistance for those desiring to be active in promoting safety and health among youth and young adults in their relationships. *See It and Stop It* was made by teens for youth and adults alike.

Dating and Violence Should Never Be A Couple: Preventing Teen Dating Violence Archive.

<http://www.mchcom.com>

The Maternal and Child Health Bureau held a webcast Tuesday, February 07, 2006 entitled ***Dating and Violence Should Never Be A Couple: Preventing Teen Dating Violence Archive***. This webcast has been archived and can be accessed via <http://www.mchcom.com> for viewing. This is a critical issue facing many adolescents today. This web seminar was organized in recognition of National Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Week, which was February 6-10, 2006. The webcast contains valuable information and resources vital for healthy youth.



*Abstinence
Save Sex
Until Marriage*

Community Corner

Antelope Memorial Hospital (AMH) in Neligh, NE was one of eight recipients awarded Abstinence Education funds through the Nebraska Health and Human Services System beginning October 1, 2003 and ending September 30, 2005. Through this funding, Tammy Struebing, grant manager for AMH , was able to bring Shelly Donahue and her *W.A.I.T. Training* message to the residents of rural north central Nebraska this past October. This was Ms. Donahue's second collaboration with Antelope Memorial Hospital. It was a powerful five days in which she delivered messages of health, happiness and productivity to an increased number of youth, parents and community leaders. Ms. Donahue promoted abstinence until marriage while teaching teens to say "Yes" to relationships and "No" to pre-marital sex.

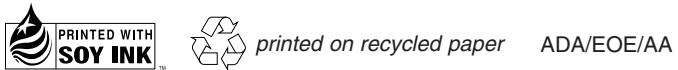
The initiative was among many projects implemented in the Neligh area over the last two years. AMH hospital administration recognized the need in choosing to lead the local abstinence education initiative based in part upon the results of the *North Central District Health Department Regional Youth Risk Behavior Survey* taken in 2003. The survey was inclusive of senior high schools in nine north central Nebraska counties, including Knox and Antelope counties. It revealed that 43% of high school students had sexual inter-

course at least once in their lifetime with rates increasing from 23% of 9th graders to 60% of 12th graders. "Antelope Memorial Hospital leads the abstinence education initiative as part of its commitment to preventative health for area youth," said Jack Green, Antelope Memorial Hospital administrator. "The goals of the initiative also include educating adults—in raising our youth to make healthy choices."

The opportunity to hear Ms. Donahue speak was publicized to communities through radio announcements created by Ms. Struebing and recorded by Ms. Donahue. The radio announcements exceeded expectations by reaching others outside of the hospital's service area. As a result the project in the Neligh area has served as a model for similar regional efforts now underway in Ashland, Gretna, Seward, Milford and O'Neill. Thank you Antelope Memorial Hospital and Tammy Struebing!

Abstinence News is published periodically by the Nebraska Abstinence Education Program and sponsored by the Nebraska Health and Human Services System

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